

Professional Dimension

The objective of this dimension is to consider what it means to be a professional in the armed forces and to understand the importance of the application of leadership in practicing our profession.

Within the profession of arms we are a very diverse group.

Traditionally we have considered membership of the total force to include all active duty officer and enlisted personnel, guard, and reserve members. Today, in addition, we can no longer overlook the crucial contributions from civilian members, dependents, and retirees. It is within this expanded conception of the profession of arms that we intend to explore the seemingly elusive concept of what a professional is and what it means to be a professional in the armed forces. In the process, we shall attempt to communicate the importance of leadership in practicing this honored profession.

Our approach to understanding and applying leadership from this vantage point is to analyze the critical elements that make up the expanded operational definition of the military profession. The military profession is one of organized and disciplined violence to safeguard our national security interest and to protect the innocent. It practices a high level of responsible, ethical behavior by killing as few people as possible while fighting for just causes sanctioned by lawful authority, and incorporates its multifaceted functions into a single integrated professional total force.

Accordingly, we have broken down this dimension of the book into three sections. The first group of articles deals with traditional military expertise and the need for leadership; the second, with responsibility, ethics, values, and the Code of Conduct; and the third, with quality and the total force.

